Interviewees: (in alphabetical order)

Hiroshi Kuwabara (Movie Director)
Eiji Nakamura (Supervising Sound Editor)
Takayoshi Nakazato (Map Director)
Yusuke Naora (Art Director)
Kazushige Nojima (Scenario)
Tetsuya Nomura (Character Designer/Director)
Motomu Toriyama (Event Director)
Toshiro Tsuchida (Battle Director)
Nobuo Uematsu (Sounds Composer)

FINAL FANTASY X – General

1. FFX development team

Over 150 people from Square

2. Release Date

Summer, 2002

3. Characters (*see attached characters profiles*)

7 characters plus 1(a character that is playable in certain battles).
It's 3 playable characters at a battle but it's possible to change the characters during the battle if you like.

4. Storyline

Sin, the monstrous existence that causes repeated destruction and chaos to the world of Spira, resurrects itself each time it is defeated. Having appeared for over 1000 years, it brings terror to the people of the world. Only the 'Last Summoning', the ability possessed only by summoners, can defeat Sin…

One day, a young man called Tidus happens to meet a girl called Yuna, who keeps her resolve to defeat Sin, just like her father the Great Summoner.
And so begins her journey to defeat the evil entity, Sin…
The journey of Yuna, the 17 year-old girl who bravely faces her torturous destiny, is the core of the story.

5. Sphere Board

The main character development system is an enhancement of the AP (Ability Points) system featured in previous Final Fantasies. It is based on the accumulation of Spheres that the party collects when winning battles against enemies. The Spheres are divided into several categories, depending on which characteristic they enhance or action that they enable on the Sphere grid. Obviously, the player will find Spheres increasing Strength, Accuracy, Speed, Magic attributes, etc. But some Spheres also let the player learn other party members' abilities (such as Black Magic spells for fighters, Steal for a summoner...).

The character development system is loosely based on the Job system found in previous iterations of Final Fantasy, whereby each character can learn specific skills derived from their class (Black and White magic, Blue magic, Thief, Fighter...). However, Final Fantasy X leaves room for true customisation: once a character has learned his "core" abilities, the rest of the Sphere grid is left open for him/her to explore. The player can then really make the most out of this amazing freedom in the character management of the game.

6. Combat System

The battle system is one of the many innovations showcased in the game. The ATB (Active Time Battle) gauge has disappeared and in its place, characters' turns are determined by their recovery speed and the type of action chosen (a system called Count Time Battle).

Two further enhancements are introduced in Final Fantasy X: for the first time, it is possible to replace members of your team during a fight; furthermore, Aeons (which are the equivalent of FFIX's Eidolons and FFVIII's GFs) play a much more dynamic role during combat.

7. Blitzball

Blitzball is the 'national sport' of the FFX world, Spira, and in the port town of Luca, an annual tournament is run with the teams from all over Spira competing.

The game is a mixture of waterpolo, rugby and football. It's played by two teams of six players, each trying to score points by kicking the ball into the opponent's goal. The game takes place in a type of water filled sphere.

It is possible to play blitzball at every save point, and you can develop your team by repeated play, or by meeting players and signing contracts with whoever you would like to sign a contract with during the game.

Media Tour 2001 FAQ

About FFX

Hiroshi Kuwabara (Movie Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The dramatic events.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  Not particularily.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  To be honest, everything was hard but if anything in particular, it would be the main characters. To create these realistic characters, we tried every possibility that we could think of, not only their body movement or facial expressions but their clothes and accessories... Anything that would move according to the body movement.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  I felt the most pleasure when we finished as during the development everything was just hard.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Wakka.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario,

design or sound)?
It made the story more dramatic.

- What is the difference from the previous titles, regarding the graphics?
  Data compression allows higher quality images and FMV with a higher frame-rate. The quality is a lot better than in previous titles.

- Which is your favorite monster?
  Sin. It's a peculiar design compared to others and in fact it took a lot of movie technology to complete.

- How much FMV does the game have?
  Just over 40 minutes.

- Regarding the Asian influence; which part did you pay the most attention to?
  Colour. With an Asian influence, we had to use many colours without making things look like toys. So what we did was to pay most attention to the lighting and the quality so that it brought a rich variety of texture and reality to the images.

Takayoshi Nakazato (Map Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The representation of FFX has gone a long way so the scenario has remarkably done a good job.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  Nothing in particular.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  To set up the camera movement according to where the characters travel on the map.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  After the development of the map system, being excited like the players

to see how the map interacts with the sequences of events or battles.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Rikku.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  I think it became easier for the players to get into the game, even for the beginners.

Eiji Nakamura (Supervising Sound Editor)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The scene Lulu where appears for the first time in the game and the intrusion at the wedding.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  Cinema in general.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  To create realism.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  The voice recording.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Lulu.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  The voice became an element holding the subtle balance between the other sound elements.

- How many sound effects are there in FFX?
  I don’t remember after 10,000.

- Do you have a favourite sound effect that you think of the most?
  The owl.

- What does creating the sound effects for games have in common with creating sound effects for films? And what is the difference?
  Creating and expressing them are common to both. The differences are that the medium of the game is TV, and we make it a little exaggerated, as we have to keep the balance between the computer generated sounds and the recorded sounds.

Yusuke Naora (Art Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The Asian themed fantasy that you don't see in other games or films. I hope that everyone can appreciate the epoch-making graphics throughout the game world and people involved in the fantasy.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  Not especially.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  I don't even want to be reminded….

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  When it ended.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Auron.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  It increased the amount of work for the CG designers a great deal.

- What differs the most from the previous titles with regard to the graphics?
  Full real time battles including seamless battles.

- Which is your favourite monster?
  The ones at the end of the game.

- Apart from the Asian influence, which part did you pay the most attention to?
  Not to pay too much attention to the Asian theme, as the intention was to create an original world in the game.

Kazushige Nojima (Scenario)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  Yuna and Tidus' last scene. It made me cry when I first watched it.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  Creating the world settings by doing something new, but still having to stay close to 'FF'.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  Gathering and sharing ideas with everyone.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  We had to take a long time matching the voice actors' performance and the characters' expressions. After many trials of voice recordings, we got to know the actors' personalities, and we even changed some parts of the characters expressions to fit those of the actors.

- Could you explain briefly the difference between the past PS titles and this first PS2 compatible title?
  - The introduction of voice-overs.
  - 3D characters and maps
  - Seamless battles

- How many mini games are there, and which one do you recommend?
  There are quite a few interesting ones. (including Blitzball of course) As

it was selected from a lot of candidates, they all are good.

Tetsuya Nomura (Character Designer/Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The voice-overs. I would like everyone to see what the use of voices does to the characters.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  As different designers created different characters, it was really hard to reach a level of satisfaction.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Jecht. When I sketched his image as a rough drawing, I just fell in love with the sketch. Usually when I sketch, I make them quite neatly, but with Jecht I just did it really roughly and it still looked great!

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  It made the characters really lively. Before I was a bit worried. But when I saw the actual product, I was convinced that this makes a huge difference. The characters suddenly became lively and you can see the feelings in them.

- What is the difference from the previous titles, regarding the graphics?
  Because of the introduction of voice-overs, the character building took a lot of hard work but as a result of that they became the strong, main element of the game. I hope everyone can empathise with that in this game.

- Which character did you find the most difficult to design?
  Not any particular characters, but I spent a lot of effort and time drawing accessories this time. On the PS2 platform, it is possible to show more detail with pictures, so something like Lulu's skirt took a lot of hard work as her belts are in a certain order.

- Apart from the Asian influence, which part did you pay the most

attention to?

As everything else apart from Tidus was based on the Asian theme, I paid more attention to Tidus, trying not to take him away too far from the theme but not too close to it either.

Motomu Toriyama (Event Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The story that makes me cry all the way through, and the event scenes are better because of the voice-overs.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  Any interesting entertainment influences our projects. It stimulates our passion.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  How to match the characters acting to the voice actor's enthusiastic performances. It was really difficult to create the realistic characters to match the real actors' performances. At the end of the day, those CG characters are just made of polygons, which are worse than poor actors.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  The voices, the motion-capture and working with real actors. Unlike the previous productions where I used to sit in front of the computers all the time it was very refreshing working with the real actors.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Auron. I am attracted by his chivalry.

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  The event scenes have improved. They are not behind film or TV pictures anymore.
  Also, to fit the tight schedule of the voice recording, we took the scenario making ahead of anything.

- Could you explain briefly the difference between the past PS titles and this first PS2 compatible title?
  The introduction of the voice-overs and camera direction of the real time polygon map.

- How many Aeons appear in the game?
  Seven, maybe??

- How many mini games are there, and which one do you recommend?
  There are small mini games and the big mini games as usual and I recommend Blitzball myself.

- We hear that in FFX there is an Asian influence. Why did you choose Asia for this title?
  We just wanted to do something different, not the usual the medieval theme or even a cyber-punk theme, but something fresh. We all did a good job on this Asian theme, after all we all are Asian, aren't we?

Toshiro Tsuchida (Battle Director)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  The scenario. I think it's really well done.
  And speaking of my charge, the tempo of the battles is a virtue and the special element of each boss is a strong point as well.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  Not particularly but if anything, the previous FF series was a reference, especially FFIV. I played it again during the planning stages.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  I can't say just one part was hardest…

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  At the latter half of development when everything like the graphics, data, and the program started coming together and started working as

one. I always feel the pleasure of creation.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  Wakka. (Because I'm in charge of battles, I choose him as he fights a good battle.)

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  The voices became the characters' special feature. The voice are even in the battle scenes when characters' cheer or shouts. Originally, 200 cheers were arranged to be spoken, according to the story development or the situations of the battle. The voices characterie the whole thing.

- Could you explain briefly the difference between the past PS titles and this first PS2 compatible title?
  - The battle system has been changed from ATB(Active Time Battle) to CTB(Count Time Battle), which is a turn-based battle system and this raises the strategy and tempo of the battle.
  - The field scenes and the battle scenes have now become the same scale on the screen and this enables the events and the battles to shift over each other seamlessly. For this reason, this time we could actually set up the interaction of scenery to adapt to the surroundings of the battles.
  - The characters and the monsters' movements are better detailed.
  - The aeons actually join the battle rather than returning after one attack.

Nobuo Uematsu (Sounds Composer)

- What do you recommend the most in FFX?
  Everything from the beginning until the end.

- Are there any materials (films, music or books) that were influential in the development of FFX?
  I'm not sure if I was influenced by this or not, but I was very impressed by 'The Cider House Rules' when I watched it.

- What was the hardest part of development?
  To maintain the balance between the voices, the music and the effects so that we could enhance the production of the three elements.

- What was the most pleasurable part of development?
  Recording ‘Otherworld’.

- Which character is your most favourite apart from Tidus and Yuna?
  The Shoopuf’s driver

- How did the voice-overs impact the development (of each scenario, design or sound)?
  The characters feel much closer to the audience.

- What differs the most from the previous titles, with regard to the sound?
  The sound is better quality.

- How many tracks did you create for FFX?
  80-90.

- Do you have a favourite tune?
  ‘Zanarkand’.

- In what kind of atmosphere do you create your music?
  I can be forced to do it anywhere, but basically I sit in front of a keyboard piano everyday from morning till night everyday.

- Do you work on the music at the same time as the game is created, or do you come along at the end of the development, watch the game and create the music that the game inspires you to?
  I start composing after I see the scenario and character designs.

About Final Fantasy series

Yoshinori Kitase (Producer)

- Can you tell us how the FF series has evolved?

The FF series is like DNA in a spiral. It's probably fair to say that no title has something in common with others in the series. Taking certain titles of the series, there could be some connections in between. For example, if we look at FF4, 5, and 6 the common link between the three of them might have been the graphics created by Tetsuya Takahashi, or if we look at 7,8, and 10 it could be Tetsuya Nomura's characters and Nojima's scenarios that would've created the common theme in the each title. However if we take a look at 1 and 10 they are completely different. In other words, each title has a similar taste to the title before or after, but if all is considered it is like a huge expanding spiral.
The changes happen every time, it's not as if it is planned, but depending on the staff or the mental condition that they are in, it changes on the spot to adjust to the circumstances or the situations like living things.

- Which direction do you think the FF series goes in?
  As I answered in the last question, we make changes without a plan, I have no idea where it is going at the moment.

- Do any of the characters in the previous FF games appear in FFX?
  No.

- When did you start the project and when did you finish it?
  We started the project in 1999 and finished in 2001.

- Is there any difference between the European versions and Japan/USA versions?
  The voice actors mainly and other modification might be made but it's not known exactly what yet.